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ABSTRACT

This study identifies the perceptions of urban disadvantaged 10th grade students toward employment in distributive education occupations within general merchandise department stores, and compares these perceptions with those held by urban 10th grade students not considered disadvantaged and with those already employed in department stores. Based on analysis of data collected, it was revealed that there are significant differences in perceptions held by students and by workers toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores. The study further revealed that the poor work perceptions of youth are a contributing factor to low enrollments in the vocational distributive education programs. Recommendations include the need for: (1) occupational information programs, (2) field trips, (3) basic business courses and junior high school exploratory programs, and (4) the realization among teacher coordinators that disadvantaged students prefer work to welfare. The full dissertation on which this is based is available as ED 033 209. (JS)

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Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged Urban High School Students Perceptions of Work Within General Merchandise Retail Department Stores

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DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED URBAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WORK WITHIN GENERAL MERCHANDISE RETAIL DEPARTMENT STORES

By

James Gordon Bennett, Jr.

Project Sponsored by

The Department of Vocational Technical Education
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, New Jersey

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FOREWARD

The Council for Distributive Teacher Education was organized in 1961. Membership in the organization consists of teacher educators and other distributive education personnel with an interest in advancing distributive teacher education. The primary interests of the Council are research and publication.

This bulletin is the report of a study to identify the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores and to compare these perceptions with those held by tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth and with those employed in distributive jobs within general merchandise department stores. As the first study of its kind, the report on Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged Urban High School Students' Perceptions of Work Within General Merchandise Retail Department Stores is especially important at this time in the local, state, regional, and national effort to increase enrollments in the vocational distributive education program.

The study revealed that there are significant differences in the perceptions held by students and by workers toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores. The study further revealed that the poor work perceptions of youth are a contributing factor to low enrollments in the vocational distributive education programs.

The report includes recommendations for improving the knowledge of youth in the area of department store occupations. In addition, recommendations for further research are included.

The findings have significant implications for teacher educators, teacher-coordinators, school administrators, guidance counselors, and others.

The study was completed by Dr. James Gordon Bennett, Jr., Assistant Professor, Department of Vocational Technical Education, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. It was published and distributed through the courtesy of the Department of Vocational Technical Education, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Requests for copies should be addressed to Dr. Bennett.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education, established by President John F. Kennedy in 1961, estimated that by 1970 the American labor force will total 100 million people.[1] Of this amount there will be more teenage job seekers than ever before as a result of the post-World War II population boom. A large portion of these youth has neither the education nor the skills to qualify for employment in sectors of the economy characterized by labor shortages. It was estimated that out of a total of 26 million young people who will become labor force members during the 1960's, 7½ million will not have completed the eighth grade.[2]

Enrollments in vocational education have been reported as not being sufficient enough to satisfy the needs of people or the projected needs of the labor force. High school programs were depicted as not keeping pace with the increasing numbers of young people, their concentration in urban centers, or their special difficulties in entering the labor force. In addition, youth with special needs were not being served adequately.[3]

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[1] Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education, Education for a Changing World of Work, Office of Education Publication No. 80020 (Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. xv.

[2] U.S. Office of Education, Vocational Education in the Next Decade. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 22.

[3] Panel of Consultants, op.cit., p. 209.

With regard to distributive education programs, the Panel stated that the preparation of in-school youth for employment in distributive occupations was extremely small when compared to potential employment. Employment of sales workers in 1961 represented nearly 6.7% of the employed workers. As a result of this discrepancy, the Panel of Consultants recommended that changes be made in existing programs to bring them more nearly into accord with present-day needs. One of the recommended changes directed at distributive education programs was that pre-employment training programs should be developed for distributive occupations to complement already existing cooperative work-study programs.[4] This recommendation was incorporated into the Vocational Education Act of 1963 which was signed into law December 12, 1963.

The Impact of the Vocational Education Act of 1963

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 introduced two new basic purposes into the nation's education system. First, vocational education was to serve the occupational needs of people through unified programs rather than to train them in separate programs of selected occupational categories. Secondly, a new group was to be served: the persons who could not succeed in a regular vocational program because of educational, socio-economic, and other obstacles.[5]

The General Report of the Advisory Council on Vocational Education in their report, Vocational Education the Bridge Between Man and His Work, reported that the second main objective of the 1963 act--to serve the youth with special needs--has hardly been touched. The Council reported that vocational education offerings tend to suffer both in quality and quantity in the slums of large cities, with distributive education enrollments low in relation to the proportion of sales jobs in the economy.[6] Historically, where occupations have been closed to minority groups, these groups have also been discouraged from pursuing training for occupations that lead to no jobs.[7]

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

[5] U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Notes and Working Papers Concerning the Administration of Programs Authorized Under Vocational Education Act of 1963*, Public Law 88-210, as amended, prepared for the Subcommittee on Education (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 34.

Rationale

The passage of legislation such as the Equal Opportunity Act of 1964 has opened up a whole new spectre of employment opportunity within the field of distribution to America's minority population. Many jobs are now open to qualified minority-group personnel within general merchandise department stores located in urban areas close to the homes of these potential workers. Yet, despite these job opportunities, distributive education programs in inner-city schools that train youth for jobs continue to suffer from underenrollment and underrepresentation of Negroes. The latter exists in spite of limited evidence that minority-group members who receive vocational education profit from it to a higher degree than do others.[8] One reason for this underenrollment and underrepresentation of minority-group students in distributive education programs may be that these students do not relate well to distributive jobs. Minority-group youth who have historically been denied equal employment within distributive education positions may perceive that there has been little change in the status quo. They may believe that few opportunities await them within the field of distribution.

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[6] Ibid., p. 39.

[7] Ibid., p. 264.

[8] Ibid., p. 37.

The young potential worker is a product of his socio-cultural experiences. He has been greatly influenced by the dominant culture and subcultures of the various groups in which he has been a member--the family, the gang, the school, etc. Each young potential worker has a definite set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and aspirations. Some of the former may be in conflict with the prevalent expectations in the work environment. These beliefs may become sources of conflict and may cause the youth to overlook distributive job opportunities that are now open to him.

Statement of the Problem

The problem for this study was to identify the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores, and to compare these perceptions with those held by tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth and those held by people employed in distributive jobs within general merchandise department stores.

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions toward distributive occupations in general merchandise stores held by tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth?

2. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of

tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise stores?

3. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of workers employed in distributive occupations within general merchandise stores?

Need for the Study

A search of the literature by the author and by DATRIX[9] revealed that no study has been made to determine the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth toward distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores. A number of studies have been conducted that examined distributive education high school students' attitudes toward retail sales occupations.

One of the greatest paradoxes is that in our affluent society, despite billions of dollars spent on welfare, public housing, education and job training, the gap between the haves and the have-nots has widened instead of narrowed. Non-whites (more than 90% of whom are Negro) still account for about 11% of the civilian labor force, but suffer more than 20% of the nation's unemployment. Although the Negro jobless rate has declined slightly since 1960, the white unemployment rate has fallen just as fast and the two-to-one ratio of Negro-to-white unemployment still persists.

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[9] DATRIX is a dissertation search service of University Microfilms, a Division of the Xerox Corporation, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Not only is the unemployment rate for Negroes substantially higher than that of whites, the gap between the average income of black and white is widening. Negroes are losing, rather than gaining, ground in reaching dollar parity with whites. While the growth in the income of Negroes has been greater than that of whites, the absolute or dollar differences between white and Negro family and individual incomes has increased to over three times what it was in 1939.

Related to this problem is the fact that most Negroes are concentrated in low-paying occupations particularly susceptible to unemployment--unskilled farm and non-farm labor, service-skilled production jobs, and service occupations. In 1966, only 20% of the employed Negroes held a white-collar job compared to nearly 50% for employed whites.[10]

An area of growing employment within the white-collar sector where Negroes have been traditionally underemployed is the distributive occupations. In 1960, employed Negroes constituted only 3.5% of the workers in distributive occupations.[11] This information is depicted in Table 1.

The Department of Labor has predicted there will be a twelve percent increase in the number of workers in sales occupations between 1965 and 1975.[12]

If non-whites are to be integrated into the main stream of the

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[10] "For Negroes, The Pie Cuts Too Thin," Business Week, August 5, 1963, p. 27.

[11] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census Population 1960 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1960), pp. 2ff.

[12] U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook Bulletin No. 1550 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), pp. 270-278.

TABLE 1

SELECTED RETAIL EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION AND RACE

Classification	White	Negro	Total	% Negro
Managers, Officials & Proprietors				
Credit Men	46,347	204	46,551	.4
Floor Men & Floor Mgrs., Store	10,859	407	11,266	.36
Purchasing Agents	102,193	709	102,902	.7
Wholesale Trade	198,526	1,064	199,590	.5
Retail Trade				
Eating & Drinking Places	68,726	3,377	72,103	5.0
General Merchandise & Limited Price Variety Stores	86,645	676	87,321	.8
Apparel & Accessories	48,624	385	49,009	.8
Furniture, Housefurnishings & Equipment Stores	30,854	144	30,998	.5
Motor Vehicle & Accessory, Retail	85,813	285	86,098	.3
Clerical and Kindred				
Shipping & Receiving Clerks	286,742	29,622	316,364	9.0
Stock Clerks & Storekeepers	293,568	33,396	326,964	10.0
Sales Workers				
Advertising Agents & Salesmen	32,732	165	32,897	.5
General Merchandise Retailing	551,730	8,991	560,721	2.0
Other Retailing	799,921	16,156	816,077	2.0
	2,643,280	95,581	2738,861	.0349

[a] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population 1960 - Occupational Characteristics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), pp. 22 ff.

American economy and society, they must be employed in ever increasing numbers in stable and growing sectors of our economy rather than the declining blue-collar jobs where they are vulnerable to unemployment.

A number of outstanding retailers have challenged distributive educators to dedicate themselves to serving minority personnel who are in serious need of education for work, and for which there now exist more and better jobs with opportunities for advancement. John S. Roberts, Executive Vice President of the F. W. Woolworth Company, charged distributive educators to face up to the problem of providing "catch-up" and follow-up distributive training to the minority community in his address to Distributive Educators at the 1967 American Vocational Education Convention.[13] Charles Y. Lazarus, President of the American Retail Federation, in addressing the National Retail Merchants Association Convention called the attention of his colleagues to the problems of the underprivileged minorities and challenged then to get involved in their plight.[14] John L. Brown, Vice President of the S. H. Kress and Company, in his address to Distributive Educators at the 1968 American Vocational Education Convention again pointed out the need to serve more minority group people.[15]

Vocational enrollments have increased from 4.5 to 6 million between

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[13] John S. Roberts, "Talent Utilization," an address presented at the chain store luncheon for the Distributive Education Division of the American Vocational Association, Cleveland, Ohio, December 6, 1968.

[14] Charles Y. Lazarus, "Living on a Volcano--Business Responsibility in a Time of Crisis," an address to the National Retail Merchants Association Convention, New York, New York, January 8, 1968.

[15] John L. Brown, an address presented at the chain store luncheon for the Distributive Education Division of the American Vocational Association, Dallas, Texas, December 11, 1968.

1964 and 1966, but secondary level enrollments constitute only a quarter of the total high school enrollment of the nation, even though five out of six youths never achieve a college education. Less than one-half of the non-college-trained labor force was found, by a 1964 Labor Department survey, to have had any formal training for current jobs.[16] The significance of this information is clear--vocational education continues to suffer in quantity with respect to those who need it most. In spite of the above, evidence indicates that vocational educators have begun to move on the problem of providing quality vocational instruction to those with special needs. Several national seminars have been sponsored by the United States Office of Education to deal with this problem. One outcome of these meetings was the recognition that research is needed to provide answers to the numerous multi-dimensional complexities which are hindering state and local level vocational educators from meeting the vocational education needs of the occupationally disadvantaged. Law[17] found that only

> . . .something in the neighborhood of fifty studies relating to the vocational education of youth with special needs have been submitted to the United States Office of Education.

At a recent seminar on the Scope of the Responsibilities of Vocational Education in Large Cities[18] the following observations were made by some of the vocational education leaders in attendance:

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[16] United States Senate Committee, op. cit., p. 34.

[17] Gordon F. Law, "Research Visibility," American Vocational Journal, XLII (November 1967), p. 65.

[18] Seminar on the Scope of the Responsibilities of Vocational Education in Large Cities, July 15-17, 1968 (Cleveland: Publication in progress).

They were experiencing difficulty in recruiting disadvantaged youth into vocational education programs; they had programs but no students.

They were encountering opposition in their attempts to establish vocational programs aimed at the disadvantaged.

The resistance to establish vocational programs was being directed by parents of disadvantaged students.

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of advantaged and disadvantaged urban youth toward entry-level distributive jobs within general merchandise stores. Such a study is a necessary foundation in any attempt on the part of distributive educators to develop and implement distributive programs for the disadvantaged.

Hypotheses Tested

The study involved the following hypotheses:

1. There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores.

2. There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of workers employed in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores.

3. There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged

youth and the perceptions of workers employed in distributive occupations within general merchandise stores.

Delimitations

This study was limited to the following:

1. The study was limited to tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools.

2. The study was limited to two public high schools located in each of the following three Ohio cities:

    a) Columbus

    b) Dayton

    c) Toledo

3. The tenth grade students enrolled in urban schools serving disadvantaged youth were Negro.

4. The study was limited to workers in distributive occupations in three Ohio cities who had two years or more of distributive work experience within general merchandise department stores. The following Ohio cities were used:

    a) Columbus

    b) Dayton

    c) Toledo

Definitions

The following definitions are presented to allow the reader to place the terms in their proper perspective.

1. Distributive occupations - occupations followed by workers directly engaged in merchandising activities or in contact with

sellers to further the distribution of goods to consumers, retailers, jobbers, wholesalers, and others, the products of farm and industry, or the selling of services and the management, operation and conduct of retail, wholesale or service businesses.[19]

2. High school serving disadvantaged youth - the school division following the elementary school, comprising most often grades 9 thru 12 or grades 7 thru 12, that enrolls a significant percentage (50 percent or more) of students who manifest one, or more, and sometimes all of the following characteristics:[20]

--low level reading ability

--limited formal vocabulary and poor speech construction and diction

--relative slowness in performing intellectual tasks

--Negro race and cultural background

--poor health and poor health habits

--an anti-intellectual attitude

--indifference to responsibility

--non-purposeful activity, much of which is disruptive

--limited experiences of the sort schools assume most of their students have had as an outgrowth of the home environment; such as contact with social, cultural, religious and governmental institutions

--a failure syndrome resulting from apathy and lack of self-confidence.

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[19] U.S. Office of Education, Administration of Vocational Education, Vocational Education Bulletin No. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Federal Security Agency, 1948), p. 5.

[20] Barbara H. Kemp, The Youth We Haven't Served (Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966, p. 6.

The school's location is usually within an area possessing some or all the following characteristics:

--many residents are receiving social welfare assistance

--the income level of the area is low

--the neighborhood is outwardly impoverished--condemned and physically deteriorating buildings are in evidence

--the unemployment rate is higher than the national average.

3. High school serving non-disadvantaged youth--the school division following the elementary school, comprising most often grades 9 thru 12 or grades 7 thru 12, that enrolls a significant percentage (50% or more) of students who do not meet the characteristics of students enrolled in high schools serving disadvantaged youth.

4. Perception of distributive occupations--the composite understanding students possess of basic entry level distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores. The awareness of objects and events within distributive work comes about via the senses and is transmitted into a mental image, which combines with previous experience to form a concept of distributive work and the role a person might play in the distributive occupation.[21]

5. General merchandise department store--retail stores carrying a general line of apparel, such as suits, coats, dresses, furnishings; home furnishings such as furniture, floor coverings, curtains, draperies, linens, major household appliances; and housewares such as table and kitchen appliances, dishes and utensils. These and other

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[21] Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 3rd Edition (New York: The Macmillan Company), 1960, pp. 941-945.

merchandise lines are normally arranged in separate sections or departments with the accounting on a departmentalized basis. The departments and functions are integrated under a single management. Establishments included in the industry normally employ 25 or more persons. The standard industrial classification designating this group is 5311--department stores-retail.[22]

6. Minority group personnel--those persons whose race and cultural background is Negro.

7. Minority group students--those students whose race and cultural background is Negro.

8. Entry level jobs--jobs within general merchandise department stores that new beginning workers are typically hired for, examples of such jobs are salesman, stock clerk, waitress, food service worker, delivery-man, cashier checker, warehouseman and shipping and marking clerk.

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[22] Executive Office of the President, Bureau of the Budget, Standard Industrial Classification Manual (Washington, D.C.: Office of Statistical Standards, 1967), p. 240.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

The major objective of this study was to identify the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores, and to compare these perceptions with those held by tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth with those employed in distributive jobs within general merchandise department stores.

The Nature of Groups in Disadvantaged Areas

Crow and Murray[23] report that people who live in disadvantaged areas are living under economic and social conditions that are significantly below national standards. The principal factors that characterize these individuals are low annual income, high rate of unemployment, underemployment of those working, poor housing, poor sanitary conditions, large families with inadequate living quarters, heavy reliance on welfare, inadequate education and attitudes of hopelessness.

The depressed inner-city areas house a thick web of social problems. Crime, alcoholism, drug addiction, poverty, illiteracy, disease, unemployment and broken families are found in inner-city areas in a massively greater degree than in society as a whole.[24] The population tends to be a stratified group of unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

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[23] Lester D. Crow and Walter S. Murray, Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child (New York: David McKay Company Inc., 1966), p. 2.

The disadvantaged can be found among all groups in all areas of the country; concentrations exist in the South and in the cities of the North. Their ethnic and racial composition tends to be from minority groups, principally Negroes.

Hauser[25] reports that in 1960 Negroes constituted 10.6% of the total population and their concentration in standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) has increased to 65%. Even more striking than the Negro increase in metropolitan areas is their concentration in the central cities of these areas. In 1960, 51% of all Negroes in the United States lived in cities of SMSA's. Of all Negroes resident in metropolitan areas, 80% lived in central cities. There was much more concentration of Negroes in metropolitan areas in central cities in the North and West than in the South. The 1960 census data show that of all Negroes in the North 93% were in standard metropolitan statistical areas with 79% in the central cities. With respect to the distribution of Negroes, they are disproportionately concentrated in the large SMSA's and especially in their central cities. The 24 SMSA's with one million or more persons in 1960 contained 38%, and their central cities 31% of the total Negro population. Comparable figures for whites are 34% and 15% respectively.[26]

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[24] Harry A. Passow, ed. Education in Depressed Areas (New York: Teacher's College Columbia University, 1963), p. 1.

[25] Philip M. Hauser, "Demographic and Social Factors in the Poverty of the Negro," in The Disadvantaged Poor, ed. by the Task Force on Economic Growth and Opportunity of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1966), p. 231.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 235.

The Negro Culture

Harrington[27] reports that there are mighty historical and economic forces that keep the poor down. There are sociological and political reasons why poverty is not seen, and there are misconceptions and prejudices that literally cloud one'e thinking. One familiar misconception concerning the poor is: "The poor are that way because they are scared of work. They prefer to live off of welfare." Harrington categorizes statements like the above as virtuous and moral in nature.

The Negro poor live in a culture of poverty; it is a vicious cycle. The poor get sick more than anyone else in the society. This is due to the way they live in slums under crowded and poor hygenic conditions. Most suffer from inadequate diets and cannot get decent medical care; when they become sick, they remain sick for periods longer than other groups in society. Consequently, they miss school, lose wages and work, and find it difficult to obtain and hold a job. Because of this, they have little money for good housing, for a nutritious diet, and for proper medical care.[28]

The family structure of the poor differs from that of the rest of society. A large number of Negro families have fatherless homes; mothers must assume a dual role in the child-rearing process. The absence of male leadership and of the father image is often a basic reason for the Negro child's difficulty in relating to adults with whom he interacts outside the home.[29] Other important differences are fewer formal marriages, more early pregnancies and markedly different attitudes toward sex. In light of these circumstances, it is difficult to conceive a situation wherein poor Negroes will experience stability and "normal" affection.[30]

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[27] Michael Harrington, The Other America--Poverty in the United States (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962), p. 14.

[28] *Ibid*., p. 15

[29] Crow, *op*. *cit*., p. 18.

Children and Schools

Inner-city children are hampered in their schooling by a complex of conditions at home, in the neighborhood, and in the classroom. Their parents seem unprepared for the perplexities of urban living. Their educational levels are lower than that of the rest of the urban population; illiteracy is a major problem. However, there are many variations within the existing subgroups.[31]

The schools serving disadvantaged children reflect a number of important characteristics. Generally, these schools have higher than normal rates of scholastic failure, truancy, disciplinary problems, dropouts, pupil transiency, and teacher turnover. Poor health, inadequate motivation, malnutrition, lack of personal cleanliness, and absence of basic learning skills are all found to a greater extent among children in depressed inner-city areas than among students in other parts of the city or in the suburbs.[32]

Miriam Goldberg[33] presents the following portrait of the disadvantaged pupil:

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[30] Harrington, op. cit., p. 16.

[31] Passow, op. cit., p. 2.

[32] Harrington, op. cit., p. 14ff.

[33] Miriam L. Goldberg, "Factors Affecting Educational Attainment in Depressed Urban Areas," in Education in Depressed Areas, ed. by A. Harry Passow (New York: Teachers College Columbia University, 1963), pp. 88-89.

The early pre-school years within the family setting provide the child with few experiences which produce readiness for academic learning either intellectually or attitudinally. The child's view of society is limited by his immediate family and neighborhood where he sees a struggle for survival which sanctions behavior viewed as immoral in the society at large. He receives little preparation for recognizing the importance of schooling in his own life or for being able to cope with the types of verbal and abstract behavior which the school will demand of him. Although he generally comes to first grade neat and clean and with his mother's admonition to be a "good boy," he lacks the ability to carry out those tasks which would make him appear "good" in the eyes of the teacher.

He encounters difficulty in mastering basic intellectual skills. This leads to a feeling of defeat and failure, the development of a negative self-image, rebellion against the increasingly defeating school experiences, and a search for status outside the school together with active resentment against the society which the school represents. Realistic or perceived barriers to social mobility through legitimate channels, one of which is longer years of schooling, weaken the drive to succeed at school, especially since success requires skills which the disadvantaged youth has been unable to master. These perceptions reinforce the search for activities which lead to actual immediate gain or to fantasies of "easy money" in the future.

Martin G. Moed[34] reports that one of the most significant "poverty-linked characteristics" of low-income youth is their inability to engage in long-range planning. Trainees do not respond to an approach that stresses admonitions such as "study and work hard now and it will pay off later." They perceive that there is no going up from the low-level first step in acquiring work skills which will be used later on. Yet these youngsters tend to express high levels of aspiration.

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[34] Martin G. Moed, "Work Programs for Low-Income Youth: Some Operational Principles," (paper prepared for the Training Institute Program on Urban Community Development Projects, New York, N.Y., April 27-May 1, 1964), p. 1.

The Pattens of Employment of Non-White Workers

Russell[35] reported that there were nearly 8½ million non-whites in the civilian labor force in the United States of 11.2% of the total employment in 1965. Non-white workers are concentrated in occupations which have limited growth prospects. They are employed less than proportionately in the occupations with bright growth prospects--the professional, managerial, technical, clerical, sales and craft occupations. More than one-fourth of employed non-white men were in semi-skilled occupations, such as drivers and factory operatives, compared with one-fifth of employed white men.

In the same year, almost one-third of the employed non-white women worked in private household service occupations. One-fourth worked in other service occupations such as attendant, chambermaid, cleaner, cook, and dishwasher. These two groups accounted for over one-half of all employed non-white women. In contrast, only one-fifth of the employed white women were working in these two groups, many as babysitters and waitresses. Most employed white women (three-fourths) were in white-collar jobs, compared with less than one-fourth of the employed non-white women.[36]

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[35] Joe L. Russell, "Changing Patterns in Employment of Non-White Workers," in Negroes and Jobs, ed. by Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh and J. A. Miller (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1968), p. 93.

[36] Ibid., p. 94.

Occupational Progress

Occupational patterns of non-white workers have changed significantly over the last decade. Many gains have come in the white-collar occupations. Total employment increased from 3.2% in 1955 to 4.7% in 1965, an increase of three-quarters of a million workers. In spite of this improvement, non-whites are still employed less than proportionately in white-collar jobs.[37]

Within the retail sales employment categories Negro employment has reached 3%. Nearly 70% of these workers in retail establishments were categorized as shipping and receiving clerks, stock clerks and storekeepers, and eating and drinking facility personnel. Table 1, page 7, depicts this information.

Employment within retail department stores rose from 917,000 in 1960 to 1,310,000 in 1967, an increase of 43% for the period or an annual employment growth rate of 5.2%. In 1968, a 5.5% gain was recorded making department store employment in the neighborhood of 1,382,000. Future employment for 1969 is expected to reach 1,451,000, a 5% gain for the year.[38] Chart I depicts this growth.

Trends in Department Store Retailing

A new awareness of the need for closer contact between retailers and the communities they serve has led increasingly to the appointment of community-service officers and vice presidents specializing in urban affairs

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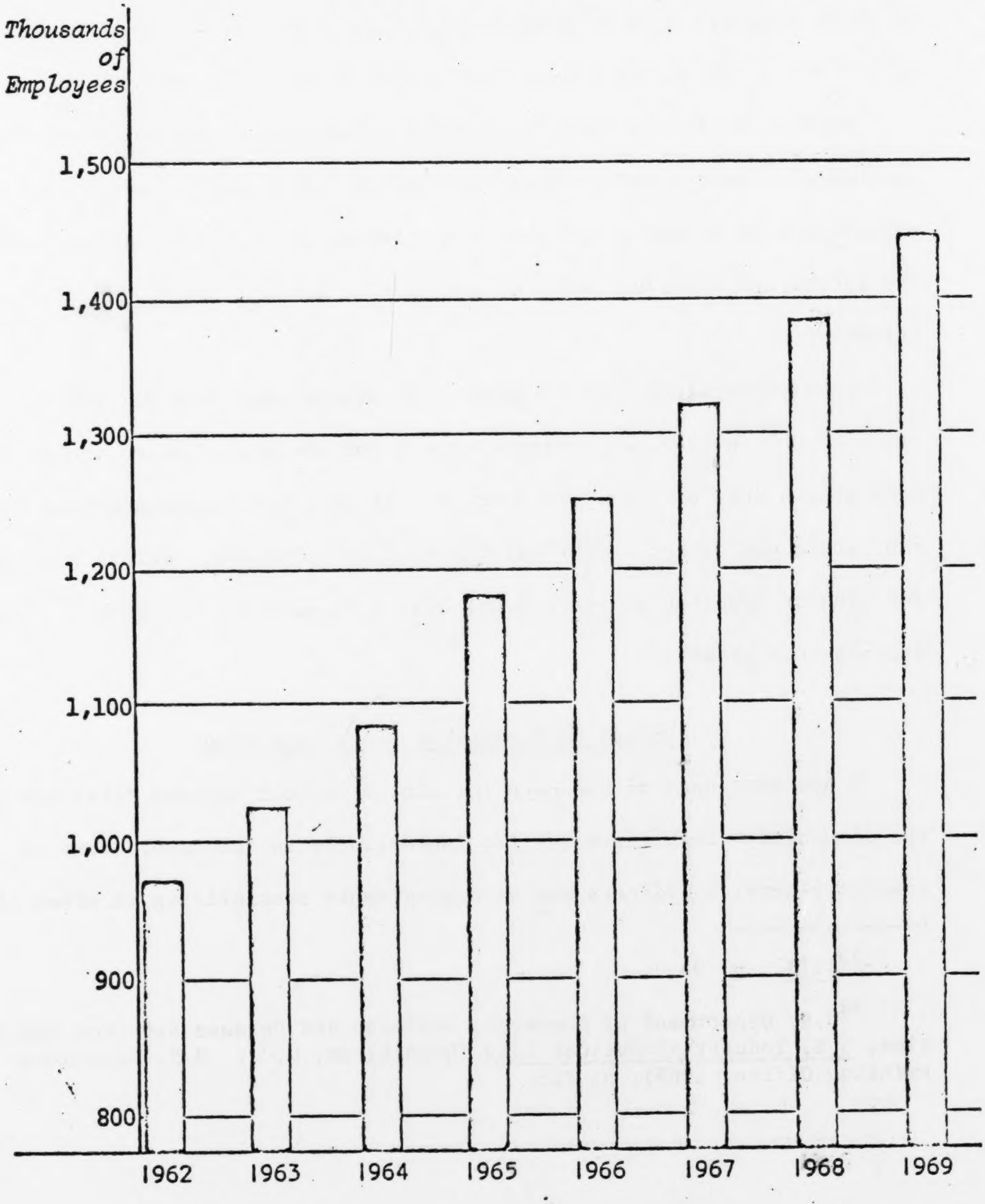
[37] Ibid., p. 95.

[38] U.S. Department of Commerce, Business and Defense Services Administration, U.S. Industrial Outlook 1969 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 289.

CHART I

DEPARTMENT STORES PROVIDE NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics and BDSA.

as members of department store management teams. Assignments of these people include the development and supervision of special programs for the inner city including consumer education, youth programs, job opportunities and community relations. As a part of a coordinated effort, the retail industry has moved in the direction of encouraging minority groups to seek employment in the retail field at all levels with career assistance and training provided.[39]

Some department store officials have been adamant in their desire to improve opportunities for minority groups. Stanley Marcus,[40] President of Neiman Marcus, announced that in his organization civil rights will be as important a factor as price, quality or delivery time in what his Texas specialty department stores buy. Marcus, in a letter to 9,000 of his suppliers, stated that Neiman Marcus intends to deal as much as possible with firms who hire and train people from minority groups. Neiman Marcus is one of the first retailers to promote such a policy, and civil rights groups believe the announcement will have a salutary effect.

Charles Lazarus,[41] President of the F. & R. Lazarus Company and one of the United States' leading department store retailers, recently challenged his fellow retailers to get personally involved in the urban crisis that has storekeepers living on a volcano. According to Lazarus, one-third of all U.S. unemployed are in the twenty largest metropolitan areas where the countries biggest department stores are based.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] "Time to Get Involved," Time, January 19, 1968, p. 83.

[41] Ibid.

John Roberts,[42] Executive Vice-President of the F. W. Woolworth Company, recently reported on the growth record of eleven of the nation's leading general merchandise retailers. According to Roberts:

> Their combined sales volume for the year 1967-68 will exceed 17 billion dollars.
>
> They operate 10,000 stores in the United States.
>
> Together they are adding 400 new stores each year.
>
> They are modernizing, refurbishing and enlarging existing stores.
>
> Their management trainee requirements number well between 8 to 10 thousand each year.

Speaking for the eleven companies, Roberts noted that employers know from experience that properly trained minority-group personnel have the potential for success. The already employed are proof that opportunity exists.

Related Studies

The amount of research conducted on the perceptions of students toward general merchandise department store work is sparse. In most cases, reference by researchers is to attitudes and aspirations rather than to perceptions.

Rosen[43] compared the educational and vocational aspirations of Negro boys (age 8 thru 14) and their mothers to those of white protestant Americans, French Canadians, American Jews, Greek-Americans, and Italian-

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[42] John S. Roberts, "Talent Utilization," an address presented at the chain store luncheon for the Distributive Education Division of the American Vocational Association, Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 6, 1967.

[43] B. C. Rosen, "Race, Ethnicity, and the Achievement Syndrome," American Sociology Review, XXIV, 1959, pp. 47 ff.

Americans. The mean vocational aspiration score of his Negro group was significantly lower than the mean scores of all other groups except the French Canadian. Paradoxically, 83% of the Negro mothers aspired to a college education for their sons. Rosen concluded that the Negro culture is least likely to accent achievement values; typically, the Negro life-situation does not encourage the belief that one can control his environment or the conviction that one can improve his condition very much by planning and hard work.

Connors[44] compared the occupational interests of Negro and white adolescent boys living in the greater Washington D.C. areas. The following conclusions were reported.

In terms of social prestige, the jobs Negro subjects aspire to (vocational aspirations) and actually expect to have (vocational expectation), do not differ significantly from those which white boys desire and expect. The discrepancy between aspiration and expectation is not any larger for Negroes than it is for whites.

Judges rated the realism of the boys' job expectations and found the Negroes to be significantly less realistic than comparable white boys'. Realism was defined as the choices boys made that were in accord with their measured interests, their intelligence, their parental education and socio-economic status, their opportunities for employment in the local area and their educational plans. Connors concluded that the degree of a boy's realism is dependent upon the degree to which he knows himself and the world of work.

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[44] Sister Maureen Connors, "A Comparative Study of the Occupational Interests of Negro and White Adolescent Boys," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University, 1965), pp. 49-50.

Kuvlesky and Bealer[45] found that aspirations do not seem to be a good predictive device for long-run occupational attainments. They cautioned that it is entirely possible that with the development of more sensitive and efficient indicators, a greater association might be found to exist between aspirations and attainment. In conclusion, they suggested that aspirations probably play at least some directional role and that the magnitude of this influence may vary by the level or type of aspiration held.

A study by Garbin, Campbell, et al.,[46] surveyed 69 vocational educators to gain insight into the attitudes, values, behavioral patterns, and problems of youth in their adjustment to the world of work. Their report stated that approximately one-half of the vocational educators surveyed felt that a large number of youths have unrealistic aspirations and expectations as to the requirements and rewards of their initial jobs. Poor attitudes toward work and working, lack of responsibility, maturity, and self-discipline, and lack of knowledge of the real demands of the work, were each reported by more than 40% of the respondents to be the attitudinal and behavioral manifestations which typify youths who experience difficulty in adjusting to work. The specific problem of lack of responsibility, maturity, and self-discipline was also rated the most important obstacle faced by youth in the transition from school to work.

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[45] William P. Kuvlesky and Robert C. Bealer, "The Relevance of Adolescents' Occupational Aspirations for Subsequent Job Attainments," Rural Sociology, XXXII, September 1967, pp. 300-301.

[46] A. P. Garbin, Robert E. Campbell, et al., Problems in the Transition from High School to Work as Perceived by Vocational Educators, Research Series 20 (Columbus: The Center for Vocational and Technical Education, 1967), pp. 49-50.

The authors reasoned that many of these attitudes and behavior patterns exist because youths have not had the opportunity to learn and inculcate the values which are requisites for occupational adjustment. Learning new roles and expectations requires practice and orientation to the new before replacement of the old can occur. The problem is that many educational programs are void of provisions that enable youths to practice, or to assimilate, those qualities that enhance their status in the work complex.

In the field of business education, two recent studies have examined the perceptions of minority-group students toward office work. Masterson[47] studied the perceptions of rural high school girls toward office work. The cultural backgrounds of his sample were Anglo, American Indian, Negro, and Spanish American. He concluded that there was no difference in the perceptions of office work between advantaged and disadvantaged rural high school girls. A significant difference was reported when the perceptions of rural high school girls (advantaged and disadvantaged) were compared to the perceptions of office workers. Dye[48] examined the office work perceptions of tenth grade female students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged youth. He reported the perceptions of youth differed in certain cities and not in others. The office work perceptions of study respondents attending schools serving disadvantaged youth were significantly different in four cities (Birmingham, Detroit, New York and Pittsburgh), and not significantly different in the other four (Boston, Columbus, Fort Worth, and Oakland) when the perceptions were compared with those held by tenth grade female students enrolled in urban high schools serving advantaged youth.

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[47] Albert C. Masterson, "Advantaged and Disadvantaged Rural High School Girls' Perceptions of Office Work," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1968), p. 177.

[48] Franklin H. Dye, "Office Work Perceptions Held by Tenth Grade Female Students Enrolled in Urban High Schools Serving Disadvantaged Youth," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1968), pp. 109 ff.

A number of studies have been conducted in the field of distributive education that examined the attitudes of students toward retail and sales occupations. Swenson,[49] Akenson,[50] and Levendowski[51] conducted parallel studies that analyzed the attitudes of senior high school sophomores, juniors and seniors toward retail and sales occupations and factors in career selections. Swenson's study respondents held more favorable attitudes toward retail and sales occupations than did the respondents of Akenson's study or Levendowski's study. The attitudes of Akenson's respondents were most similar to the attitudes of Levendowski's respondents. It is significant to note, however, that no major differences in the attitudes rendered by the three groups were noted. No effort was made in any of the studies to measure the attitudes of successfully employed people in retail and sales occupations.

Patterson[52] conducted a study to determine the attitudes of Ohio Distributive Education students toward their schooling and their future

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[49] Curtis L. Swenson, "Students' Attitudes Toward Retail and Sales Occupations and Factors in Career Selections," (unpublished master's paper University of Minnesota, August, 1960).

[50] Howard Akenson, "Senior High School Students' Attitudes Toward Careers in Retail Stores, Sales Occupations, and Factors in Selecting a Career," (unpublished master's paper, University of Minnesota, June 1961), p. 57.

[51] J. C. Levendowski, "How Senior High School Students View Retailing, Sales Occupations, and Factors that Influence Their Career Selections," (unpublished master's paper, University of Minnesota, 1961), p. 72.

[52] Gerald E. Patterson, "Attitudes of Distributive Education Students Toward School and Work," (unpublished master's thesis, The Ohio State University, 1963).

plans for schooling. Rountree[53] analyzed the attitudes of Distributive Education students toward their classroom instruction, their work experience and their careers in distribution. He concluded that respondents held favorable attitudes for all three areas studied. The poorest attitudes were reported in the careers in the distribution segment of his report.

Snygg and Combs[54] explained the phenomenon of the inability of people to cope with behavior standards that are apart from their usual environment as follows:

> The individual's total understanding and perceptions are the determining cause of his behavior. His total field of understanding and perceptions is not abstract, artificial or unreal. It is the everyday surroundings in which he lives and takes to be reality. No matter what he is told, his own understandings of reality will always seem real, substantial and solid.

Samson[55] explained the importance of student perceptions toward educational programs and occupational careers. He reasoned that there is little doubt that today's adolescents are conscious of the "right things". They want to take the right courses and work toward the right career. If a particular career does not meet the "appropriate standard" of youth, it may be because the occupation has not managed to adequately describe itself. Many occupations are living today in the shadow of an image made many years ago.

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[53] Wallace D. Rountree, "An Analysis of Distributive Education Students' Attitudes Toward Their Instruction, Their Work Experience, and Careers in Distribution," (unpublished master's study, University of North Carolina, 1965), pp. 60 ff.

[54] Donald Snygg and Arthur Combs, Individual Behavior (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), pp. 11-15.

[55] Harland E. Samson, "Research in Career Development for Distributive Education," Business Education Forum, XVI (April, 1962), pp. 17-19.

This study will attempt to furnish insight into the perceptions of youth toward work within general merchandise department stores so that educational programs can be designed and implemented to make a contribution to their understanding the realistic world of retail sales work within department stores.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT, VALIDATION AND REVISION OF THE PERCEPTION SCALE

A perception[56] scale was developed to identify the perceptions of entry-level distributive jobs held by tenth grade high school students attending high schools serving disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged youth. The following procedure was used to develop the scale.

Formulation of the Items

The resources used to develop a working list of general merchandise department store distributive occupation perception statement were:

1. Textbooks--Seven distributive education and marketing textbooks were reviewed. Reading emphasis was high in areas that discussed basic job levels in general merchandise department store distributive occupations. The seven books reviewed are listed below.

Barker, Clare W., Anderson, Ira D. and Butterworth, J. D. Principles of Retailing. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956.

Cox, Reavis. Distribution in a High-Level Economy. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965.

Johnson, H. Webster. Creative Selling. Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing Company, 1966.

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[56] Perception--The overall understanding students have of entry-level jobs in the field of distribution.

Merchandising Division of the National Retail Merchants Association. The Buyer's Manual. New York, 1966.

Personnel Group, The National Retail Merchants Association. Training for Specific Needs, New York, 1958.

Phillips, Charles F. and Duncan, Delbert J. Marketing Principles and Methods. Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1960.

Richert, Henry G., Meyer, Warren G. and Haines, Peter G. Retailing Principles and Practices. New York: Gregg Division, The McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962.

2. Interviews--Several informal discussions were conducted with the teacher educator for distributive education at The Ohio State University.

3. Survey Requests--

   a. Vocational research associates at The Center for Leadership and Research Development in Vocational and Technical Education, Columbus, Ohio, were interviewed and asked to formulate and submit statements on basic distributive jobs. All of the research associates were former teachers of high school vocational education and graduate students in vocational education.

   b. Ohio State Department of Distributive Education personnel were asked to submit statements pertaining to distributive jobs.

   c. Vocational education graduate students--Approximately 25 students enrolled in Education 807, Survey of Vocational Education, were asked to submit five statements on basic distributive jobs.

Form Development

The following procedure was used in the development of the preliminary form of the perception scale.

1. The variable to be measured was specified.

2. The items that were considered to be indicators of position on the variable were formulated.

3. The response patterns appropriate for an "item scale" were determined.

4. The items were edited using specified criteria.

5. A pre-test was conducted to determine the reliability of the perception scale.

In editing the items, the following relevant criteria were employed:

1. Use of simple wording.

2. Applicability of attitudes toward basic distributive work.

3. Quality of expressing a perception.

4. Expression of the items in the vernacular of the job situations and in language understandable to tenth grade disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged high school students.

The preliminary form of the perception scale included 142 items pertaining to several kinds of entry-level distributive jobs within general merchandise department stores. No subgrouping of these various jobs was developed or employed. The rating plan developed for the scale was based on the Likert Method of Summated Ratings. According to Edwards,[57] the Likert Method of Summated Ratings allows the statements to be given to a group of subjects who are asked to respond to each one in terms of their own agreement or disagreement with the statements. The subjects are permitted to use any one of five categories:

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[57] Allen L. Edwards, Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957, p. 149.

1.	Strongly Agree	(SA)
2.	Agree	(A)
3.	Undecided	(U)
4.	Disagree	(D)
5.	Strongly Disagree	(SD)

The categories are weighted in such a way that the response made by the individuals with the most favorable perceptions will always have the highest positive weight. The favorable statements are represented by the "Strongly Agree" (SA) category and the unfavorable statements by the "Strongly Disagree" (SD) statements.

Editing the Preliminary Form

The preliminary form contained 142 statements and was given to Dr. Robert Bullock's Sociology 752 class (Methods of Social Measurement). The class review resulted in delimiting the number of items to eighty statements. The refined 80 items were then re-typed and submitted to a five member panel. The panel was made up of four inner-city distributive education teacher-coordinators (three from Cleveland, one from Columbus) and one D.E. city supervisor (Toledo). The panel was asked to edit the items using the criteria listed on page 33, to recommend new items and to evaluate the scale direction of each statement. The items were then re-typed and referred to as the original perception form. The form was pretested by administering the perception scale to 25 tenth grade Columbus Central

High School students. Initial plans were to include one hundred students, but an unexpected change of class schedules made this impossible.

Validity of Original Perception Scale

Construction validity is established through a long continued interplay between observation, reasoning and imagination. The construction validity of the perception scale was judged sound by the following groups:

1. The four distributive education panal members.
2. The distributive education teacher educator at The Ohio State University.
3. The distributive education staff specialist at the Center for Vocational and Technical Education, Columbus, Ohio.
4. Seven research associates at the Center for Vocational and Technical Education.

The four groups above reviewed a list of approximately 142 perception statements. On the basis of their examination the list was reduced to 80 items. The 80 item scale was reviewed by:

1. Sociology 752 students--Approximately twelve class members reacted to the perception scale and made a few suggestions to improve its validity. These suggestions were incorporated into the revised scale.

2. The 25 Central High School students were asked to write comments on the back of the scale on wording, terms and general sentence structure. Several positive statements reflecting clarity and accuracy of statements were contributed. No negative statements were reported.

Statistical Validation of Original Perception Scale

The pre-test results were subjected to an internal consistency item analysis developed by Rundquist and Sletto, Likert and others.[58] In this type of analysis the total sample was divided into two halves, low and high, on the basis of total scale scores. Item responses were summed for each respondent, the resulting total scores were arrayed from low to high, and the sample divided into two groups: the first N/2 cases were defined as the low half, and the second N/2 cases defined as the high half. The process of computing totals, arraying them and dividing them into low and high halves was carried out using an IBM 1620 computer and a program developed by Dr. Patrick Cleaver of the Sociology Department at The Ohio State University. The following values were computed utilizing Dr. Cleaver's program.

Scale Value Difference (SVD)

The SVD is the difference between the low-half mean and the high-half mean for an item when the division is based on total scores. It is interpreted as a measure of internal consistency, the higher the SVD, the more consistant the item is with the other items in the scale. The SVD can assume negative values; when this occurs, it may indicate that the item was weighted incorrectly.

$$SVD = X_{hi_t} - X_{lo_t}$$

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[58] Ibid., pp. 161-170.

Critical Ratio (CR)

The critical ratio is an inferential statistic computed for the SVD. The CR tests the null hypothesis that the SVD is zero in the population from which the sample was drawn. (Mathematically, the critical ratio can be interpreted as a Z score or as a close approximation to a t-score with n-2 degrees of freedom.)[59] According to Bullock[60] a critical ratio of 3. indicates the item has strong discriminating power.

$$CR = \frac{S^2_{lo}}{N_{lo}} \quad \frac{S^2_{hi}}{N_{hi}}$$

Maximum Possible Scale Value Difference (MPSVD)

The MPSVD is the difference between the low-half mean for an item when the division is made on the basis of responses to that item. It is interpreted as a measure of the discriminating power of the item when it is considered by itself rather than as a part of the scale. The two means from which the MPSVD is computed are not reproduced in the computer output.

$$MPSVD = X_{hi_i} - X_{lo_i}$$

Means

The program reproduces three means for each item: a low-half mean, a high-half mean and a total mean. The low and high-half means are computed using the division based on total scores. The total mean is the mean for that item for the entire sample.

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[59] Hubert M. Blaylock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 175.

[60] Interview with Robert Bullock, Professor of Sociology, The Ohio State University, April 2, 1969.

$$X = \frac{EN}{N}$$

Standard Deviations

Standard deviations are computed for each item for the low-half, high-half and total sample. The halves are based on the division by total scores.

$$s = \frac{NEX^2 \ - \ (EX)^2}{N^2}$$

Scale Value Difference Ratio (SVDR)

The SVDR is the ratio of the SVD to the MPSVD and is interpreted as the percent of the maximum discriminating power of the item achieved when the item is combined with other items in the scale.

$$SVDR = \frac{SVD}{MPSVD}$$

Split-Half Correlation (RSPLIT)

The split-half correlation is a measure of the overall internal consistency of the scale. For each respondent the odd-numbered items are summed and the sum is defined as X; the even-numbered items are summed and defined as Y. The split-half is a product-moment correlation of X and Y for the total sample.

$$RSPLIT = \frac{NEXY - (EX)\ (EY)}{(NEX^2 - (EX)^2)\ \ (NEY^2 - (EY)^2)}$$

Corrected Split-Half Correlation (RCORR)

This value is computed by applying the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula to the split-half correlation. In computing the raw split-half the total scale is divided into two subscales (even items and odd items with k/2 items). The corrected split-half is an estimate of the correlation of scales with k items.[61]

$$RCORR = \frac{2(RSPLIT)}{1(RSPLIT)}$$

Reliability of the Original Perception Scale

The Split-Half Method as discussed above was used for computing the estimated reliability coefficients of the original perception scale. Through the use of the computer, it was determined that the original form of the perception scale in the pretest to 25 students had a .5949 coefficient of of reliability. This coefficient was corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula, and a coefficient of .7460 was obtained. The initial computer run, which yielded the .5949 and .7960 coefficients, reported that 25 items possessed negative SVD scores. This suggests that perhaps the statements were ambiguous in terms of assigning a definite weight direction.

Because of the small N of 25 in the pre-test and a desire on the part of this researcher to achieve a high reliability coefficient, it was decided to strengthen the perception scale by rewording the items and eliminating duplicate and ambiguous statements. This was accomplished, and the 80-item revised perception scale was administered in a second pre-test to 392

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[61] William W. Rozeboom, Foundations of the Theory of Prediction (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1966), pp. 374-426.

Westerville, Ohio, high school tenth graders.

Reliability of the Revised Perception Scale

The reliability of the revised perception scale was tested, using the same internal consistency item analysis that the original scale was subjected to (see pages 37 - 40). The analysis determined that the second pre-test of the 80-item scale yielded an initial coefficient of reliability of .509. This coefficient was corrected to .675 using the Spearman-Brown formula. The scale was then delimited to 55 items (Appendix A) using a critical ratio cut-off score of 3.0. This resulted in improving the coefficient of reliability to a maximum score of .80 reaching the goal of establishing a high reliability coefficient. Achieving this meant that the perception scale was sufficiently reliable for further administration.

Administration of the Perception Scale

Method of Selecting the Cities

As a result of consultations with leading professional distributive education people, it was concluded that a perception study of this nature could be successfully carried out within the state of Ohio. Four Ohio city school systems--Cleveland, Toledo, Dayton and Columbus--were contacted and solicited to participate in the study. All four cities responded favorably to the request. The cities of Columbus, Dayton and Toledo were selected because of their similarities with regard to population and job-market characteristics. It was agreed that these three cities would provide a good cross-section of Ohio's tenth grade public school student population, which was requisite for this study.

Method of Selecting Schools

Within each of the cooperating city school systems, the City Supervisor for Distributive Education was contacted and asked to identify two public high schools in his city, one that serves predominantly disadvantaged youth and one that serves predominantly advantaged youth. The percentage in each case was to be at least 55 percent of the total enrollment of that school.

The racial balance of the six schools used in the study is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RACE

Metropolitan Area & School		% Black	% White	Total
Columbus	A	00	100	100
	B	58.3	41.7	100
Dayton	A	00	100	100
	B	95	5	100
Toledo	A	97	3	100
	B	00	100	100

The perception scales were administered in each school by the research project director with assistance from school guidance and teaching personnel.

Method of Selecting General Merchandise Department Store Workers

Early in the formulation stages of this research study two alternative plans were developed to secure the involvement of department store workers.. The first plan called for the participation of a general merchandise retail department store chain. The design called for the administration of the perception scale to employees of the cooperating company. The second plan involved high school distributive education teacher-coordinators from each of the cities involved in the study. The teacher-coordinators were to select and administer the scale to a number of department store workers in their communities.

Five national department store retailers each with extensive operations in the state of Ohio and operating outlets in each of the cities included in the study were contacted and asked to express their interest in participating in the study. Each of the five national retailers indicated that they preferred not to take part in the study.

As a result of the inability to secure the cooperation of any major general merchandise retailer at the local and national level, it was decided to employ the second plan and work through the distributive education teacher-coordinators in each of the three city school systems (Columbus, Dayton and Toledo). The D.E. city supervisors and teacher-coordinators were asked to contact retail department store workers who had been employed at least one year after high school graduation in a general merchandise department store.

Responses

The perception scale was administered to 1012 tenth grade students in six high schools in three Ohio cities during a one-week period--April 21 to 25, 1969--and 977 completed perception scales were used for this study.

The perception scale was administered to a total of 157 general merchandise department store workers, and 154 completed perception scales were used for this study.

There are four groups of participants included in this study--three groups of students and one group of department store workers. One group of students consisted of 350 black tenth graders enrolled in three public high schools serving disadvantaged youth in three Ohio cities. The second group of students included 600 white tenth graders enrolled in three Ohio cities. The third group of students included 27 white tenth graders enrolled in one public school serving disadvantaged youth.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Introduction

Statistical analyses and a discussion of the data collected to determine the perceptions of high school students attending urban schools serving disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students are presented in this chapter. The data are reported according to the groups being compared.

Analysis of the Data

The statistical analysis employed in this study was the t-test. This statistical treatment is defined as the ratio of the difference between the means divided by the standard error of the difference.[62]

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 \; \bar{X}_2}{SD\bar{X}}$$

The difference-of-means (t-test) was used as it permits separate pair-by-pair comparisons between the groups being studied.

The perception scale administered to the participants in this study contained fifty-five items. The statements were clustered into six subcategories for convenience in analyzing the data. Six tables make up the t-test comparisons for the groups being reported. Table 3 presents the subscale categories and category amounts.

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[62] N. M. Downie and R. W. Heath, Basic Statistical Methods (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers), 1965, pp. 140-141.

TABLE 3

SUBSCALE CATEGORIES AND CATEGORY AMOUNTS

Heading		Number of Items Per Category
Job Prerequisites		13
Job Rewards		10
Personnel Relationships		10
General Working Conditions		9
Job Expectations		9
Discrimination		4
	Total Items	55

Method of Analysis

Two kinds of analyses were performed to determine the study respondents' perceptions of work within general merchandise retail department stores: a total score analysis and an individual item analysis. Electronic data processing was used in computing the statistical analyses. The IBM 360 and 7094 computer systems were used.

Disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students were compared to determine if there were significant differences in the perceptions these two groups held toward working in a general merchandise retail department store employees. A fourth group of white respondents (N = 27) who attended a school serving disadvantaged students were identified and their scores compared to those of the employees.

Interpretation of the Data

Tables 4 through 9 contain item analysis based on t-test comparisons of department store work perceptions of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students with department store employees, disadvantaged students with non-disadvantaged students, and white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged students with department store employees.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Job Prerequisites

Table 4 contains the results of the t-test analyses of the comparisons of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students' perceptions of department store job prerequisites with those of department store employees. The third comparison presented is between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, and the fourth between white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged students and department store employees.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on six of the thirteen items relating to job prerequisites. The responses of the two groups did not differ on seven items.

The responses of the non-disadvantaged students differed with the department store employees' responses on the item stating that the only quality one needs to be a salesman is to like people. A higher percentage of the employees perceived the job of salesman as requiring additional qualities. The responses of the two groups differed on the item stating that it does not require much training to be a waitress. A higher percent-

TABLE 4

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF JOB PREREQUISITES BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSES

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
8	The only quality one needs to be a salesman is to like people.	3.56**	7.59**	5.66**	.96
21	It doesn't require much training to be a waitress.	5.28**	6.43**	2.27*	1.60
29	Retail Salesmen must know how to figure sales tax.	4.41**	1.48	3.79**	1.91
32	Sales people do not need to be highly educated.	.26	2.33*	3.63**	1.31
34	Good physical coordination is necessary in working as a cashier-checker	4.91**	3.43**	1.27	.23
40	Just about anyone can be a retail salesman.	2.63**	3.16**	1.02	1.57
47	Food service handlers must be in good health.	.43	.46	.94	.42
49	Warehousemen must know how to keep records	1.27	4.15**	7.07**	3.54**

TABLE 4--Continued.

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
50	You don't need much of an education to work as a cashier-checker.	1.27	4.15**	7.07**	3.54**
53	Good grooming and dress is important in working as a retail salesman.	.89	2.47*	2.18*	.71
55	Sales work requires a good working knowledge of basic arithmetic.	2.22*	1.30	.71	1.20
57	A good personality is a must in retail selling.	.70	2.07*	1.84	1.00
58	Good speaking ability is a requirement for getting a job in a store.	1.06	.79	.26	.52

* = Significant at the .05 level of confidence

** = Significant at the .01 level of confidence age of employees disagreed with the statement. The two groups differed on the item stating that retail salesmen must know how to figure sales tax. A larger percentage of employees felt that retail salesmen must know how to figure sales tax. On the item stating that good physical coordination is necessary in working as a cashier-checker, a higher percentage of employees thought this to be true than did the non-disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating just about anyone can be a retail salesman; a larger percentage of employees thought this to be untrue. On the statement that sales work requires a good working knowledge of basic arithmetic, a higher percentage of employees perceived this as being true than did the student group.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on eight of the thirteen items relating to department store job prerequisites. The responses of the two groups did not differ significantly on five items.

The two groups differed significantly on the item stating the only quality one needs to be a salesman is to like people. A higher percentage of the employees perceived the job of salesman as requiring additional requisites. The responses of the two groups differed on the item stating that it does not require much training to be a waitress. A higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did the student group. The disadvantaged students indicated disagreement with the statement that sales people do not need to be highly educated a higher percentage of the time than the department store employees. The two groups differed on the item stating that good physical coordination is necessary in working as a cashier-checker. A higher percentage of the employees perceived the job as requiring good physical coordination than did the student group. The two groups differed on the item stating that just about anyone can be a retail salesman. A larger percentage of department store employees disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that you do not need much of an education to work as a cashier-checker. A higher percentage of the students disagreed with this statement than did the employees. The two groups differed on the item regarding good grooming and dress as important in working as a retail salesman. A higher percentage of employees perceived grooming and dress as important in working as a retail salesman. The groups differed on the item stating that a good personality is a must in retail selling. The employees felt a good personality was essential in retail sales work a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students.

Disadvantaged Students with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the non-disadvantaged students, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on six of the thirteen items. The responses of the two groups did not differ significantly on seven items. The two groups differed on the statement that the only quality one needs to be a salesman is to like people. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement and felt that other qualities are also needed. The two groups differed on the item stating that it does not require much training to be a waitress. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. The disadvantaged students indicated a higher percentage of the time than did the non-disadvantaged that retail salesmen must know how to figure sales tax. The disadvantaged students also disagreed a higher percentage of time than did the non-disadvantaged group with the statement that sales people do not need to be highly educated. The two groups also disagreed on the statement that you do not need much of an education to work as a cashier-checker. The disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement a higher percentage of time than did the non-disadvantaged students. The two student groups disagreed on the statement that good grooming and dress is important in working as a retail salesman. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged than disadvantaged students felt that good grooming and dress were important in working as a retail salesman.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on one of the thirteen items relating to department store job prerequisites. A higher percentage of white students than department store employees disagreed with the statement that you do not need much of an education to work as a cashier-checker.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Job Rewards

Table 5 contains the results of the t-test analyses of the comparisons of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students' perceptions of department store job rewards with those of department store employees. The third

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND
DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF JOB
REWARDS BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSES

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
13	You might just as well go on welfare than work in a retail store for $1.60 an hour.	2.46*	.44	4.08**	.15
15	Many successful business men began their careers as stock boys.	2.5	3.50**	4.64**	1.19
16	Apart from the pay check there is little reward in being a cashier-checker.	.40	1.14	2.28*	.57
18	The most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary.	7.02**	12.73**	7.45**	4.27**
19	Working as a loyal sales employee pays off in promotions to supervisory jobs.	2.02*	.15	2.75**	.38
20	Retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions.	3.22**	6.26**	4.73**	2.91**

TABLE 5--Continued.

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
25	You would be willing to take a basic job in a store as a stock boy if there was promise of being promoted to a better job.	2.72**	1.74	1.15	.97
41	Retail sales work is all right as a part-time job, but it does not offer much promise as a career.	3.71**	6.24**	4.15**	2.70*
44	If you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour, you would accept it.	11.64**	8.64**	2.92**	4.69**
52	Retail sales work is important to the economy of the United States.	4.86**	8.45**	5.60**	2.21*

* = Significant at the .05 level of confidence.

** = Significant at the .05 level of confidence.

comparison presented is between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, and the fourth between white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged students and department store employees.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on eight of the ten items relating to job rewards. The responses of the two groups did not differ on two items. The two groups differed on the item stating that you might as well go on welfare than work for $1.60 an hour. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the department store employees. The two groups differed on the statement that the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary. A higher percentage of department store employees perceived that the starting salary was not the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job. On the item stating that working as a loyal sales employee pays off in promotions to supervisory jobs, a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students than department store employees believed that working as a loyal sales employee pays off. The responses of the two groups differed on the item stating that retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions. A higher percentage of department store employees perceived this statement as untrue than did the non-disadvantaged students. On the item stating that you would be willing to take a basic job in a store as a stock boy if there was promise of being promoted to a better job, a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students than the department store employees agreed with the statement. The responses of the two groups differed on the item stating that if you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour, you would accept it. A higher percentage of students than employees indicated that they would accept. The non-disadvantaged students and the department store employees differed in their responses to the item stating that retail sales work is important to the economy of the United States. A higher percentage of employees indicated this was so than did the students. The two groups differed on the statement that retail sales work is all right as a part-time job, but it does not offer much promise as a career. A higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did the non-disadvantaged students.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on six of the ten items relating to department store job rewards. The responses of the two groups did not differ significantly on four items. The two groups differed on the statement that many successful businessmen begin their careers as stock boys. A higher percentage of department store employees than disadvantaged students perceived that many successful businessmen began their careers as stock boys. The two groups differed on the item stating that the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary. A higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. On the item stating that retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions, the department store employees indicated disagreement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students.

The two groups differed on the statement that if you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour, you would accept it. A higher percentage of disadvantaged students than department store employees indicated they would accept a sales job for $1.60 an hour. The two groups differed on the item stating that retail sales work is important to the economy of the United States. A higher percentage of employees than disadvantaged students felt that retailing was important to the economy of the U.S. On the item stating that retail sales work is all right as a part-time job, but it does not offer much promise as a career, the department store employees disagreed with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students.

Disadvantaged Students with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the disadvantaged students were compared with the non-disadvantaged students, the responses of the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on nine of the ten items. The responses of the two groups of students differed on the item stating that you might just as well go on welfare than work in a retail store for $1.60 an hour. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. On the item stating that many successful businessmen began their careers as stock boys, the non-disadvantaged students indicated agreement with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students. The two student groups differed on the item stating that apart from the paycheck there is little reward in being a cashier-checker. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. On the item stating that working as a loyal sales employee pays off in promotions to supervisory jobs, the non-disadvantaged students agreed with the statement a higher percentage of time than did the disadvantaged students. The two student groups differed on the item stating that retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. On the item stating that if you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour, you would accept it, the non-disadvantaged students agreed with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that retail sales jobs are important to the economy of the U.S. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students indicated agreement with the statement than did the disadvantaged students. The two student groups differed on the item stating that retail sales work is all right as a part-time job, but it does not offer much promise as a career. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on five of the ten items relating to department store job rewards. The white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth and the department store workers differed in their responses on the statement that the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary. A higher percentage of department store employees than white students perceived that salary was not the most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job. The two groups differed on the item stating that retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions. A higher percentage of white students disagreed with the statement than did department store employees. On the statement indicating that if you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour, you would accept it, the student group agreed with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the department store employees. The responses of the two groups differed on the statement that retail sales work is important to the economy of the U.S. A higher percentage of department store employees than students perceived retail sales work as being important to the economy. On the item stating that retail sales work is all right as a part-time job, but it does not offer much promise as a career, a higher percentage of department store employees than white students indicated disagreement with the statement.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Job-to-Job Personnel Relationships

Table 6 contains the results of the t-test analyses of the comparisons of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students' perceptions of department store job-to-job personnel relationships with those of department store employees. The third comparison depicted is between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, the fourth between white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged students and department store employees.

TABLE 6

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF JOB-TO-JOB PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSES

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
11	The only people who make money working in retail stores are managers or owners.	3.52**	2.68**	.91	.58
23	You have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman.	6.80**	7.63**	1.84	1.34
24	Middle-aged sales clerks are more trustworthy than teenaged sales clerks.	2.96**	.66	3.06**	1.01
30	The prime motive of professional retail sales personnel is making money.	.54	.46	1.50	1.21
31	Retail salesmen are dishonest.	3.35**	7.10**	5.07**	2.43*
35	Stock clerks have a lot of free time to play cards, etc.	1.57	3.67**	2.97**	.04
39	Good waitresses are valuable employees.	1.06	3.98**	4.03**	.13
43	Store managers allow sales people to read newspapers and magazines or to take a smoking break when they are not busy.	4.83**	8.52**	5.62**	1.72
48	Salesmen should be able to give their friends special deals on merchandise.	2.39*	5.09**	3.54**	1.50
51	The job of shipping and marking goods is important to retail sales.	4.48**	5.48**	2.02*	3.17**

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence.
**Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on seven of the ten items relating to job-to-job personnel relationships. The responses of the two groups did not differ on three items. The responses of the non-disadvantaged students differed with the department store employees on the item stating that the only people who make money working in retail stores are managers or owners. A higher percentage of students than department store workers perceived the statement as being untrue. On the statement that you have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman, a higher percentage of department store workers have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman. The two groups differed on the statement that middle-aged sales clerks are more trustworthy than teenaged sales clerks. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did the department store workers. The two groups disagreed on the item stating that retail salesmen are dishonest. A higher percentage of department store employees rejected the statement than did the student group. The responses of the two groups differed on the item stating that store managers allow sales people to read newspapers and magazines or to take a smoking break when they are not busy. A higher percentage of department store employees than non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement. On the statement salesmen should be able to give their friends special deals or merchandise, a higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did the students. The two groups also disagreed on the item stating that the job of shipping and marking goods is important to retail sales. A higher percentage of employees perceived the job as being important to the total sales effort.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on eight of the ten items relating to department store job-to-job personnel relationships. The two groups did not differ on their responses to two items. The two groups differed on the statement that the only people who make money working in retail stores are managers or owners. A higher percentage of students than department store employees perceived the statement as being untrue. On the item stating that you have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman, a higher percentage of employees had a friend or relative who was employed as a retail salesman than did the students. The two groups differed on the statement that retail salesmen are dishonest. A higher percentage of employees than students felt that the statement was untrue. On the item stating that stock clerks have a lot of free time to play cards, etc., a higher percentage of department store employees than students felt that that was not case. The two groups differed on the statement that good waitresses are valuable employees. A higher percentage of department store workers believed that waitresses were valuable employees than did the student group. The two groups differed on the statement that store managers allow sales people to read newspapers and magazines or to take a smoking break when they are not busy. A higher percentage of employees perceived the statement as being untrue. The two groups differed on the item stating salesmen should be able to give their friends special deals on merchandise. A higher percentage of employees than students felt that salesmen should not be permitted to do so. The two groups also disagreed on the statement that the job of shipping and marking goods is important to retail sales. A higher percentage of department store employees perceived the job of shipping and marking clerk as being important to retail sales.

Disadvantaged with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the disadvantaged students were compared with the non-disadvantaged students, the responses of the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on seven of the ten items relating to job-to-job personnel relationships. The responses of the two groups did not differ on three items. The two groups differed on the item stating that middle-aged sales clerks are more trustworthy than teenaged sales clerks. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged students felt that middle-aged sales clerks were not more trustworthy than teenaged sales clerks than did disadvantaged students. On the statement that retail sales clerks are dishonest, a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. The two groups of students differed on the item stating that stock clerks have a lot of free time to play cards, etc. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement good waitresses are valuable employees. A higher percentage of the non-disadvantaged students believed that good waitresses were valuable employees than did disadvantaged students. On the item stating that store managers allow sales people to read newspapers and magazines or to take a smoking break when they are not busy, a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the notion than did disadvantaged students. The two groups of students disagreed on the statement that salesmen should be able to give their friends special deals on merchandise. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students believed that such action should not be permitted than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that the job of shipping and marking goods is important to retail sales. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived the job as being important than did disadvantaged students.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on two of the ten items relating to job-to-job personnel relationships. The responses of the two groups did not differ on eight items. The two groups differed on the statement that retail salesmen are dishonest. A higher percentage of the department store employees perceived the statement as being incorrect. The two groups also differed on the item stating that the job of shipping and marking goods is important to retail sales. A higher percentage of department store employees felt the job was important than did the students.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Job Expectations

Table 7 contains the results of the t-test analysis of the comparisons of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students' perceptions of department store job expectations with those of department store employees. The third comparison presented is between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, and the fourth between white students attending an urban school

TABLE 7

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF JOB EXPECTATIONS BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSES

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
9	One nice thing about working as a salesman in a department store is that management isn't really concerned about your being on time for work.	2.58**	3.88**	2.10**	1.31
10	Store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry.	6.32**	9.67**	5.25**	3.14**
17	Selling is a very stable job.	.69	.25	.67	.55
22	Retail sales people take a lot of criticism from customers.	1.67	2.97**	2.06*	.08
26	Retail sales work affords no opportunity for job growth.	1.69	4.68**	4.78**	.74
36	Retail sales personnel are expected to perform a great many simple tasks like unpacking and marking merchandise, placing it on racks for sale, keeping merchandise neat, picking papers off the floor, etc.	6.47**	6.61**	.91	3.06**

TABLE 7--Continued.

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
37	Most customers expect sales people to be quick and accurate.	1.42	4.24**	3.54**	.54
38	Waiting on customers requires a great deal of patience and understanding.	.64	.85	1.98*	.50
56	Most retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress.	6.43**	7.87**	2.60**	1.96*

* Significant at the .05 level of confidence .

** Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

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serving disadvantaged students and department store employees.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on four of the nine items relating to department store job expectations. The responses of the two groups did not differ on five items. The two groups differed on the item stating that one nice thing about working as a salesman in a department store is that management is not really concerned about your being on time for work. A higher percentage of the department store employees disagreed with the statement than did students. On the item stating that store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry, a higher percentage of employees rejected the statement than did non-disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that retail sales personnel are expected to perform a great many simple tasks. A higher percentage of employees than students agreed that department store workers are expected to perform many simple tasks. The two groups also disagreed on the item stating that most retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress. A higher percentage of employees than non-disadvantaged students agreed that stores have specific rules regarding dress.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed on seven of the nine items relating to department store job expectations. The two groups differed on the statement that one nice thing about working in a department store is that management is not really concerned about your being on time for work. A higher percentage of department store employees disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. The two groups disagreed on the item stating that store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry. A higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. On the item stating that retail sales people take a lot of criticism from customers, a higher percentage of employees perceived this to be true than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that retail sales work affords no opportunity for job growth. A higher percentage of department store workers felt that retail sales work offered job-growth opportunities than did students. The two groups differed on the statement pertaining to retail sales personnel performing a great many routine tasks. A higher percentage of workers felt this was the true perception than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item that most customers expect sales people to be quick and accurate. A higher percentage of employees believed that customers expected quickness and accuracy than did the student group. The two groups also disagreed on the statement that most retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress. A higher percentage of department store employees agreed that retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress than did disadvantaged students.

Disadvantaged Students with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the non-disadvantaged students, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on seven of the nine items relating to job expectations. The responses of the two groups did not differ on two items. The two student groups differed on the statement regarding management as not being too concerned about employees being on time for work. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived management as being concerned that employees be on time for work than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived that store employees work more hours than others in business and industry than did disadvantaged students. On the statement that retail sales people take a lot of criticism from customers, a larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived that retail sales people take a lot of criticism from customers than did disadvantaged students. The two student groups differed on the item stating that retail sales work affords no opportunity for job growth. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived that retail sales work afforded opportunities for job growth than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that most customers expect sales people to be quick and accurate; a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived this to be so than did disadvantaged students. On the statement that waiting on customers requires a great deal of patience and understanding, a larger percentage of the non-disadvantaged students perceived this to be so than did the disadvantaged students. The two student groups also disagreed on the item stating that most department stores have rules regarding dress. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students perceived that stores had specific rules regarding dress than did disadvantaged students.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on three of the nine items relating to job expectations. The two groups differed on the statement that store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry. A larger percentage of department store employees than students disagreed with the statement. On the item stating that retail sales personnel are expected to perform a great many simple tasks, a higher percentage of department store workers indicated agreement with the statement than did students. The two groups also disagreed on the statement that most retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress. A larger percentage of department store employees than students indicated that specific dress codes were in existence in most retail department stores.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Working Conditions

Table 8 contains the results of the t-test analysis of the comparisons of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged student's perceptions of working conditions with the perceptions of department store employees. A third comparison was made between the responses of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students and a fourth comparison between white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth and department store employees.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance

TABLE 8

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF WORKING CONDITIONS BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSIS

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
12	Retail sales positions are dead-end jobs.	2.05*	4.42**	3.73**	1.71
14	Cashier-checkers are rarely promoted to important jobs.	.29	2.50*	3.08**	.84
27	If you've worked once as a retail salesman, it's helpful in securing other employment.	3.68**	4.00**	.84	1.39
28	In time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people.	4.83**	10.60**	7.79**	2.98**
33	Store workers are less likely to have steady employment than factory workers	.11	3.34**	4.88**	.14
42	Stealing from an employer is a minor crime.	2.04*	5.68**	5.14**	.30
45	The more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work.	3.98**	5.78**	2.99**	2.79**
46	Retail sales workers need to go back to school once in a while to learn about new practices, techniques, etc.	4.29**	.26	4.90**	2.05*
54	Working in a department store as a retail salesman is a good first job.	.43	3.57**	5.38**	.29

* Significant at the .05 level of confidence.
** Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

on six of the nine items relating to working conditions within a department store. The two groups did not differ on three items. On the item stating that retail sales positions are dead-end jobs, a higher percentage of department store employees perceived the statement as untrue than did non-disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that if you've worked once as a retail salesman, it is helpful in securing other employment. A larger percentage of department store employees agreed that retail sales experience is helpful in securing other employment than did non-disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that in time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people. A larger percentage of department store employees than non-disadvantaged students did not believe that sales people would be displaced by vending machines. The two groups differed on the item stating that stealing from an employer is a minor crime. A larger percentage of department store workers disagreed with the statement than did the non-disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that the more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students than department store employees perceived that the more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work. On the statement that retail sales workers need to continue their education to learn about new practices and techniques, a larger percentage of department store employees than non-disadvantaged students believed that continuing one's education was necessary to keep abreast of job changes.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on eight of the nine items relating to working conditions. There was no significant difference between the responses of the two groups on one item. The two groups differed on the item stating that retail sales positions are dead-end jobs. A higher percentage of department store employees rejected the statement than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that cashier-checkers are rarely promoted to important jobs. A larger percentage of department store employees disagreed with the item than did students. On the statement that if you've worked once as a retail salesman, it's helpful in securing other employment, the department store employees indicated agreement with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that in time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people. A larger percentage of department store employaes rejected the notion than did disadvantaged students. The two goups differed on the statement that store workers are less likely to have steady employment than factory workers. A higher percentage of employees disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that stealing from an employer is a minor crime. A larger percentage of department store workers disagreed with the statement, thus agreeing that stealing was a significant crime, than did disadvantaged students. On the item stating that the more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work, the disadvantaged students indicated agreement to the statement a higher percentage of time than did the department store employees. The two groups also disagreed on the item stating that working in a department store as a retail salesman is a good first job. A larger percentage of the employees agreed that working in a department store as a salesman was a good first job than did the disadvantaged students.

Disadvantaged Students with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the non-disadvantaged students, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on eight of the nine items relating to working conditions. The responses of the two groups did not differ on one item. The two groups of students disagreed on the statement that retail sales positions are dead-end jobs. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students believed that retail sales positions were not dead-end jobs than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that cashier-checkers are rarely promoted to important jobs. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement than did disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the statement that in time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students did not believe that sales people would be displaced by vending machines than did disadvantaged students. On the item stating that store workers are less likely to have steady employment than factory workers, the non-disadvantaged students indicated disagreement with the statement a higher percentage of the time than did the disadvantaged students. The two groups differed on the item stating that stealing from an employer is a minor crime. A larger percentage of non-disadvantaged students than disadvantaged students disagreed with the statement indicating that they perceived stealing from an employer to be a more serious crime.

The two groups of students disagreed on the item stating that the more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work. A larger percentage of the disadvantaged students agreed that more schooling brings about more success in retail selling than did the non-disadvantaged students. On the statement that retail sales workers need to continue their educations to deep abreast of new practices, a larger percentage of disadvantaged students agreed with the statement than did non-disadvantaged students. The two groups also disagreed on the statement that working in a department store as a retail salesman is a good first job. A higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students than disadvantaged students agreed that retail selling in a department store was a good first job.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on three of the nine items relating to working conditions. The two groups differed on the item stating that in time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people. A higher percentage of department store workers disagreed with the statement than did students. The two groups differed on the statement that the more schooling you have, the more successful you will be in sales work. A larger percentage of the student group agreed with the item than did the department store workers. The two groups also disagreed on the item stating, "retail sales workers need to continue their education to keep abreast of new practices." A larger percentage of department store employees than students accepted the statement as reality.

Perception Comparisons Regarding Department Store Employment Discrimination

Table 9 contains the results of the t-test analysis of the comparisons of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students' perceptions of discrimination in department store employment with the perceptions of department store employees. A third comparison was made between the responses of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students and a fourth comparison between white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth and department store employees.

Non-Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the non-disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of department store employees, there were no significant differences between the two groups on four of the discrimination items. The two groups agreed that minority-group and white job-applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen. They agreed that there were few non-white management people in retail sales. They perceived that non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers. The two groups also agreed that today non-white people with sales training do not have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in retail sales.

Disadvantaged Students with Employees. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on two of the four items regarding discrimination in retail department stores. There was no significant difference between the two groups on two items.

TABLE 9

DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' AND DEPARTMENT STORE EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON T-TEST ANALYSES

Item No.	Item	Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Employees N = 154	Disadvantaged Students N=350 With Non-Disadvantaged Students N = 600	White Students Attending A School Serving Disadvantaged Youth N=27 With Employees N = 154
59	Minority-group and white job-applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen.	.69	5.69**	6.43**	1.93
60	There are few non-white management personnel in retail sales.	.40	.97	1.83	1.23
61	Non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers.	.85	5.36**	8.05**	4.98**
62	Today, non-white people with sales training have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in retail sales.	1.25	1.23	.13	.03

* Significant at the .05 level of confidence.
** Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

The two groups agreed that there are few non-white management people in retail sales, and that today non-white people with sales training do not have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in retail sales. The two groups disagreed on the item stating that minority-group and white job-applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen. A higher percentage of disadvantaged students did not believe that minority and white applicants had equal chances of being hired as salesmen than did department store employees. On the statement that non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers, a larger percentage of disadvantaged students perceived the statement as being untrue than did department store employees.

Disadvantaged Students with Non-Disadvantaged Students. When the responses of the disadvantaged students were compared with the responses of the non-disadvantaged students, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on two of the four items regarding discrimination in retail department stores. There was no significant difference between the two groups on two items. The two student groups agreed that there are few non-white management personnel in retail sales and that today non-white people with sales training do not have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in retail sales. The two groups of students disagreed on the item stating that minority-group and white job-applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen. A higher percentage of disadvantaged students disagreed with the item than did non-disadvantaged students. On the item stating that non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers, a larger percentage of disadvantaged students perceived the statement as being untrue than did non-disadvantaged students.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth with Department Store Employees. When the responses of the white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were compared with the responses of the department store employees, the two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on one of the four items relating to discrimination in retail department stores. The two groups agreed that minority-group and white job-applicants do not have equal chances of being hired as salesmen. The groups agreed that there are few non-white management personnel in retail sales. They also agreed that today non-white people with sales training do not have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in retail sales. The two groups disagreed on the statement that non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers. A higher percentage of department store employees than students indicated that non-white workers are promoted as often as white workers.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged high school students toward work within general merchandise retail department stores. To accomplish this goal, it was necessary to determine the perceptions that department store employees have toward department store work; thus, a secondary objective of the study was to determine what department store workers perceive department store work to be like.

A perception scale was developed with the help of research associates at the Center of Leadership and Research Development in Vocational and Technical Education, Columbus, Ohio, Ohio State Department of Distributive Education personnel, and vocational education graduate students at The Ohio State University. Two pilot studies were conducted in Columbus and Westerville, Ohio, to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument, and the perception scale was revised into final form.

Through the cooperation of distributive and vocational education supervisory personnel in the Ohio cities of Columbus, Dayton, and Toledo, six high schools were selected to participate in the study. Six hundred non-disadvantaged students, three hundred and fifty disadvantaged students and twenty-seven white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were selected to respond to the perception scale.

Department store employees were located by local distributive education teacher-coordinators in each of the three cities included in the study. The qualification for including department store workers in the study was that they must have been employed full time in a retail department store for one year and that they be high school graduates. One hundred and fifty-four department store workers responded to the perception scale.

The instrument was composed of fifty-five statements that were divided into six categories: 1) job prerequisites, 2) job rewards, 3) job-to-job personal relationships, 4) job expectations, 5) working conditions, 6) discrimination. Data from each questionnaire were graded using a key developed by the researcher and a distributive educative personnel panel. The data were punched into data processing cards, and a t-test analysis of significance was performed for each perception scale item by respondent groups.

Conclusions

All conclusions made by the researcher are based on the findings from data used in this study. Three null hypotheses were postulated; a statement of each hypothesis tested and a summary of the findings pertaining to each hypothesis is listed below:

Hypothesis 1: There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth toward employment in distributive occupations within general merchandise retail department stores.

T-test item analysis indicated that a very high percentage of the items

(39 of 55) revealed a highly significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in the perceptions of general merchandise retail department store work between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged urban high school tenth grade students. The t-test analysis of significance revealed significant differences in all six of the item categories or subscales when these two groups were compared. As a result, the null hypothesis was not accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of workers employed in distributive occupations within general merchandise retail department stores.

T-test analysis indicated that a very high percentage of the items (39 of 55) revealed a highly significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in the perceptions of general merchandise retail department store work between disadvantaged students and department store employees. The t-test analysis revealed significant differences in five of the six categories of items when the two groups were compared. The two groups differed at the .05 level of significance on six of the thirteen items in the category job prerequisites. As a result of the overall differences in the remaining five categories, the null hypothesis was not accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There is no difference between the perceptions of tenth grade students enrolled in urban high schools serving non-disadvantaged youth and the perceptions of workers employed in distributive occupations within general merchandise department stores.

T-test item analysis indicated that a high percentage of the items (31 of 55) revealed a highly significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in the perceptions of general merchandise retail department store work between non-disadvantaged students and department store employees.

The t-test analyses revealed significant differences in three of the six categories of items when the two groups were compared. The two groups differed at the .05 level of confidence on six of the thirteen items in the category job prerequisites. The two groups differed on four of the nine items in the category on job expectations. There was no difference between the two groups on the items relating to discrimination. As a result of the overall differences in the majority of items on the total scale the null hypothesis was not accepted.

Discussion

In tabulating the results of the three samples that make up the total sample of this study, a fourth group of twenty-seven white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth were identified. A t-test analysis was made between the retail department store work perceptions of the twenty-seven students and the department store workers even though no hypothesis was postulated for this comparison. The results of this comparison indicate that there are few significant differences overall (15 of 55) between the twenty-seven students and the department store employees toward work within retail department stores. This phenomenon is difficult to explain. It may be due to the fact that a majority of the student group indicated agreement with the item that you have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman, as did the employees. Thus, students through personal associations, between themselves and friends or relatives who work as retail salesmen, gained knowledge about various kinds of retail sales work. The location of the school this student group attended was very near a retail department store hub of activity. This indicates daily contact with the retail community. This, too, may be a contributing factor to their mostly favorable perceptions of retail department store work.

Further Conclusions

Based on the statistical analysis of the data collected in this study, the following major generalizations can be made concerning the study respondents.

White Students Attending an Urban School Serving Disadvantaged Youth

The perceptions toward general merchandise retail department store work of the twenty-seven white students attending an urban school serving disadvantaged youth most clearly approximate the work perceptions of the department store employees. In general, they believe that education is an important factor in being able to work successfully and advance in the retail department store setting. As a respondent group, they tend to place more emphasis on beginning salaries than do the employees; they believe that retail sales jobs offer opportunity to advance, but they indicate little support of the notion that retail sales work is important to the economy. In addition, they show a reluctance to trust retail salesmen, agree that they would begin work in a department store for a minimum wage of $1.60 an hour, and feel more strongly than the employees that selling is not as stable as other business operations. They agree with the employees that minority-group and white job-applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen, that there are few non-white management personnel in retail sales, and that non-white people with sales training have better opportunities of gaining employment in retail sales than do qualified whites.

Non-Disadvantaged Students Attending Urban High Schools

The overall perceptions toward general merchandise retail department store work of the non-disadvantaged study respondents ranked second behind the white students attending a school serving disadvantaged youth in agreeing with or approximating the perceptions of the department store employees. In general, the perceptions of this group reflected American Idealism or Traditionalism toward work. They agree with the department store employees that such factors as personality, educational attainment, good health and good speaking ability are important employment requisites. They feel that working as a loyal employee has its rewards and that you can get ahead starting at the bottom and working your way up the ladder. They believe that the "real money" makers in retailing are managers or owners, and that teenaged sales clerks are as trustworthy as middle-aged sales clerks. The non-disadvantaged students seemed to be well informed concerning on-the-job work rules and customs. They believe that retail selling is a stable occupation, that it takes a tolerant person to work as a retail salesman, and that salesman efficiency is important when serving customers. They concur with the twenty-seven white student respondents and the employees that minority group representation on the management level in retailing is sparse. They agree that minority-group job applicants do not have as good an opportunity as whites do of being hired as salesmen and that minority-group personnel are not promoted as often as white personnel.

Disadvantaged Students Attending Urban High Schools

The farthest removed perceptions toward retail department store work, when compared with the perceptions of department store workers, are held by disadvantaged students attending urban high schools. They believe strongly that education plays a very important part in becoming employed and advancing in the job. They are less aware of the traditional requisites necessary to become employed and to be promoted as a retail salesman than the other two student groups. They indicate they would rather work than be dependent on welfare. They place more emphasis on the starting salary of a job and indicate a willingness to work for a minimum wage of $1.60 an hour to a greater extent than the other student responents. The disadvantaged students feel salesmen are dishonest to a greater degree than do the other study respondents, and they are less aware than the other groups concerning general department store work rules. The disadvantaged students perceive that stealing from an employer is a minor crime to a greater extent than all other respondent groups. This phenomenon is due to the fact that the disadvantaged students are closer to a broad variety of major crimes as residents of inner-city ghettos. In other words, in the minds of disadvantaged students, stealing from an employer is a much less serious crime than peddling dope, engaging in or supporting prostitution, or committing rape or murder.

Disadvantaged students believe to a greater extent than the other study respondents that factory work is more stable than department store work. They believe that minority-group job applicants do not have equal opportunity of employment in the retail sales occupations. They profoundly agree that there are few minority-group personnel on the retail sales management level, that minority-group personnel are promoted less frequently than their white counterparts, and that they are less likely to gain employment in retail sales than comparably qualified whites.

In light of the above, it can be stated that the poor work perceptions of the disadvantaged youth are a contributing factor to their low enrollments in vocational distributive education programs. If they have poor perceptions toward work within general merchandise department stores, it seems obvious that they will not seek training for department store work.

Disadvantaged students that gain employment in a department store without formal distributive education training may, because of their poor perceptions toward the specialized work, misinterpret their work roles, become frustrated, and eventually become unemployed for a variety of reasons.

Recommendations

The findings of this study have indicated a significant difference in the perceptions of general merchandise retail department store work by disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students and department store workers. It is evident that changes must be made in the distributive education curriculum to overcome the misperceptions students hold toward work within general merchandise retail department stores.

The following recommendations are presented as suggestions for improving the knowledge of department store occupations of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged high school students.

1. Occupational information programs need to be developed and implemented to better inform young high school students of: 1) the work opportunities that exist in the retail department store field, 2) the kinds of jobs

and job duties in department store work, 3) the importance of retailing to the economy of the U.S., 4) the personal and material reward available through department store work, 5) the personal qualities necessary for success in distributive work, and 6) the importance of working together as a part of the department store team.

2. Opportunities should be made available to department store employers to take part in occupational information programs within the school.

3. Disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students should be permitted to take field trips to department store facilities.

4. Distributive education curricula should emphasize special units on job-to-job personal relationships within the department store, job rewards, and working conditions. In addition, units on job prerequisites, job expectations, and job discrimination should be presented.

5. Basic business courses and other junior high school exploratory programs need to be developed and implemented.

6. Experimental programs in distributive education should be undertaken to determine effective ways of improving student attitudes and perceptions toward retail work and careers in retailing.

7. Distributive teacher-coordinators should take a special interest in disadvantaged students. They should visit their schools and participate in occupational information programs.

8. Distributive education teacher-coordinators and guidance counselors should emphasize that distributive education programs are not terminal and that education should go on through continuing education programs.

9. Distributive education teacher-coordinators should realize that

disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students are willing to begin work for the current minimum wage.

10. Distributive education teacher-coordinators should take note that disadvantaged students prefer work to welfare.

11. Retail department store managers and owners need to emphasize to their workers that continuing education is a necessary part of job growth and promotion.

Recommended Research

The results of this study indicate that additional research would enhance the knowledge of educators interested in the problems of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged high school students. It could possibly bring about solutions to the problem of under-enrollment within distributive education programs on the high school and post high school levels.

Some suggestion for further research are:

1. Replication of this study is needed in other geographic areas and business settings of the country. The research studies should include and go beyond the department store classification to the other major retail categories such as retail grocery, discount department store, chain specialty shop, etc. Such research should attempt to determine and compare the perceptions of the following groups toward the various categories of retail sales work:

Employed workers from a disadvantaged background with employed workers from a non-disadvantaged background.

Employed workers from a disadvantaged background with students attending high schools serving disadvantaged youth.

Employed workers from a non-disadvantaged background with white students attending schools serving disadvantaged youth.

Employed workers from a non-disadvantaged background with students attending schools serving non-disadvantaged youth.

Employed workers from a non-disadvantaged background with disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged rural youth.

2. A study to determine the perceptions of distributive education teacher-coordinators toward disadvantaged students.

3. A study to determine the existence and nature of distributive education teacher-coordinators' recruitment programs to enroll students in distributive education.

4. An experimental study to determine the effectiveness of occupational information programs in the junior high school on high school distributive education program enrollment.

5. An experimental study to determine the feasibility of presenting distributive education programs via team teaching utilizing a teacher-coordinator and department store retailer.

6. A study of successful department store employees to determine what qualities they hold that can be taught to students.

7. A study to determine whether all high school students have equal chances of enrolling in existing distributive education programs.

8. A study to determine whether a teacher's ethnic background is a factor in the successful training of minority group students.

9. A number of other studies of an informative and interesting nature could be recommended. Certainly more research on minority-group students will

bring answers to the problems that are evident in training the disadvantaged for the world of work.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

FINAL PERCEPTION SCALE

Circle your choice of answer.

1. Age

    1. 14
    2. 15
    3. 16
    4. 17 or over

2. Sex

    1. male
    2. female

3. Parent or guardian employment information

    1. both parents or guardians employed
    2. father only, employed
    3. mother only, employed
    4. both parents or guardians, unemployed
    5. mother unemployed
    6. father unemployed
    7. don't know

4. Parent or guardian job information (Answer this in one sentence or less)

    Describe the type of work of your:

    Mother ____________________

    Father ____________________

    Guardian ____________________

5. After you complete your schooling, what type of work do you plan to do? (Answer in one sentence or less.)

    ____

6. Have you ever received any occupational or job counseling in your school?

    1. Yes What year or years? __________
    2. No

7. If yes to above: Was this occupational or job counseling helpful to you in choosing your 11th and 12th school grade program?

   1. Yes
   2. No

Each statement below tells you something about people who work in retail department stores like Woolworth, Penneys, W. T. Grant, etc. To help you determine your response to the statements imagine yourself in your first job and as part of the situation represented by the statement. This is what the letters after each statement mean:

SA	A	U	D	SD
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please draw a circle around your answer for each statement. If you can't make up your mind or feel you don't know, circle the U (Undecided).

8. The only quality one needs to be a salesman is to like people. SA A U D SD

9. One nice thing about working as a salesman in a department store is that management isn't really concerned about your being on time for work. SA A U D SD

10. Store personnel work fewer hours than others in business and industry. SA A U D SD

11. The only people who make money working in retail stores are managers or owners. SA A U D SD

12. Retail sales positions are dead-end jobs. SA A U D SD

13. You might just as well go on welfare than work in a retail store for $1.60 an hour. SA A U D SD

14. Cashier checkers are rarely promoted to important jobs. SA A U D SD

15. Many successful businessmen began their careers as stock boys. SA A U D SD

16. Apart from the paycheck there is little reward in being a cashier checker. SA A U D SD

17. Retail selling is a very stable job. SA A U D SD

18. The most important thing to consider in choosing a sales job is the starting salary. SA A U D SD

19. Working as a loyal sales employee pays off in promotions to supervisory jobs. SA A U D SD

20. Retail sales jobs offer little opportunity to advance to management positions. SA A U D SD

21. It doesn't require much taining to be a waitress. SA A U D SD

22. Retail salespeople take a lot of criticism from customers. SA A U D SD

23. You have a personal friend or relative who is a retail salesman. SA A U D SD

24. Middle aged sales clerks are more trustworthy than teenage sales clerks. SA A U D SD

25. You would be willing to take a basic job in a store as a stockboy if there was promise of being promoted to a better job. SA A U D SD

26. Retail sales work affords no opportunity for job growth. SA A U D SD

27. If you've worked once as a retail salesman it's helpful in securing other employment. SA A U D SD

28. In time automatic vending machines will displace most sales people. SA A U D SD

29. Retail salesmen must know how to figure sales tax. SA A U D SD

30. The prime motive of professional retail sales personnel is making money. SA A U D SD

31. Retail salesmen are dishonest. SA A U D SD

32. Sales people do not need to be highly educated. SA A U D SD

33. Store workers are less likely to have steady employment than factory workers. SA A U D SD

34. Good physical coordination is necessary in working as a cashier checker. SA A U D SD

35. Stock clerks have a lot of free time to play cards, etc. SA A U D SD

36. Retail sales personnel are expected to perform a great many simple tasks like unpacking and marking merchandise, placing it on racks for sale, keeping merchandise neat, picking papers off the floor, etc. SA A U D SD

37. Most customers expect sales people to be quick and accurate. SA A U D SD

38. Waiting on customers requires a great deal of patience and understanding. SA A U D SD

39. Good waitresses are valuable employees. SA A U D SD

40. Just about anyone can be a retail salesman. SA A U D SD

41. Retail sales work is alright as a part-time job but it does not offer much promise as a career. SA A U D SD

42. Stealing from an employer is a minor crime. SA A U D SD

43. Store managers allow sales people to read newspapers and magazines or to take a smoking break when they are not busy. SA A U D SD

44. If you were offered a job as a salesman for $1.60 an hour you would accept it. SA A U D SD

45. The more schooling you have the more successful you will be in sales work. SA A U D SD

46. Retail store workers need to go back to school once in a while to learn about new practices, techniques, etc. SA A U D SD

47. Food service handlers must be in good health. SA A U D SD

48. Salesmen should be able to give their friends special deals on merchandise. SA A U D SD

49. Warehousemen must know how to keep records. SA A U D SD

50. You don't need much of an education to work as a cashier checker. SA A U D SD

51. The job of shipping and marking goods is important in retail sales. SA A U D SD

52. Retail sales work is important to the economy of the U.S. SA A U D SD

53. Good grooming and dress is important in working as a retail salesman. SA A U D SD

54. Working in a department store as a retail salesman is a good first job. SA A U D SD

55. Sales work requires a good working knowledge of basic arithmetic. SA A U D SD

56. Most retail department stores have specific rules regarding dress. SA A U D SD

57. A good personality is a must in retail selling. SA A U D SD

58. Good speaking ability is a requirement for getting a job in a retail store. SA A U D SD

59. Minority group and white job applicants have equal chances of being hired as salesmen. SA A U D SD

60. There are few non-white management people in retail sales. SA A U D SD

61. Non-white store workers are promoted as often as white workers. SA A U D SD

62. Today non-white people with sales training have a better opportunity than qualified whites to gain employment in a retail store. SA A U D SD

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